

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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L-03 IGA-02 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DIWY-01 /058 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 4977

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : ECRP, EAID, BA

SUBJECT : CERP 008: EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:
BAHRAIN

REF : STATE A-2507 DATED JUNE 14, 1977

1. SUMMARY. THE MODEST AND GENERALLY WELL-PROGRAMMED UNDP
IN BAHRAIN CONTINUES AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED (REFS:
MANAMA 331 AND 76 MANAMA 376). AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THE
PROGRAM FOR THE NEW 1977-81 CYCLE IS STILL UNDER NEGOTIATION
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN AND UNDP. IT WILL FEATURE
A MAJOR NEW INITIATIVE -- A COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND
SCIENCES -- AS WELL AS CONTINUE THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ITS
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ON-GOING PROJECTS -- THE NATIONAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING
DEVELOPMENT UNIT. THE MAJOR, BUT LESS SUCCESSFUL, HOTEL
SERVICES PROJECT WILL BE PHASED OUT IN LATE 1977/EARLY 1978.
THE NEW UNDP RESREP APPEARS DYNAMIC AND COMPETENT, FILLING
A VOID CREATED BY THE PREMATURE DEPARTURE OF HIS PREDECESSOR
AND AN ALMOST EIGHT MONTH ABSENCE OF ANY RESREP IN BAHRAIN.
BAHRAIN WILL PAY SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE UNDP COSTS AND

THE TOTAL FIVE-YEAR CYCLE WILL BE APPROXIMATELY \$11 MILLION (\$7.5 MILLION FROM GOB; \$2.5 MILLION FROM UNDP). END SUMMARY.

2. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (MANAMA 331) THE TWO MAJOR UNDP PROGRAMS IN BAHRAIN ARE ADMINISTERED BY THE ILO. THEY BOTH INVOLVE TRAINING OF BAHRAINI NATIONALS -- IN VOCATIONAL SKILLS AND HOTEL/CATERING SERVICES. AS NOTED IN THAT REFTEL, EMBASSY JUDGMENT WAS THAT THE NATIONAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROGRAM (BAH/-74-0011) WAS WELL PLANNED AND HAS BEEN WELL EXECUTED. IT HAS SOLID GOB SUPPORT AND AN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE FROM ITS TARGET AUDIENCE -- YOUNG, ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE BAHRAINI MEN AND WOMEN. UNDP APPARENTLY SHARES THIS ASSESSMENT AS IT PLANS TO CONTINUE ITS SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM INTO THE NEW FINANCIAL CYCLE AFTER THE APRIL 1978 EXPIRY OF THE CURRENT AGREEMENT.

3. THE SECOND MAJOR ILO-ADMINISTERED PROGRAM, MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR HOTEL/CATERING SERVICES (BAH/73-007), IN EMBASSY JUDGMENT IS ILL-CONCEIVED GIVEN CURRENT MANPOWER REALITIES IN BAHRAIN (SEE MANAMA 331 FOR A DETAILED DISCUSSION OF OUR VIEW OF THE FLAWS OF THIS PROGRAM). UNDP, WE NOW UNDERSTAND, PLANS TO PHASE OUT ITS SUPPORT FOR THIS PROGRAM WHEN THE CURRENT AGREEMENT ENDS, OCTOBER 1977. WE THINK THIS UNDP DECISION DESERVES SUPPORT. IF THE GOB DESIRES TO KEEP THE PROGRAM GOING WITH ITS FUNDS, SO BE IT.

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4. IN ADDITION TO THESE TWO TRAINING PROJECTS, THE FOLLOWING UNDP ACTIVITIES CONTINUE IN BAHRAIN: (A) LEGAL ADVISOR TO DEPT. OF LEGAL AFFAIRS (BAH/73/003): THIS IS A MARGINAL PROGRAM, WHICH THE GOB COULD EASILY FUND/POSSIBLY RECRUIT FOR ON ITS OWN; (B) INDUSTRIAL ESTATES ADVISOR ATTACHED TO MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIES (BAH/73/012): AN IMPORTANT, HIGH PRIORITY, JOB; (C) VETERINARY ADVISOR TO MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE (BAH/74/015): SHOULD BE PRIME CANDIDATE FOR TOTAL GOB FUNDING AS SHOULD (D) HORTICULTURIST ATTACHED TO DEPT. OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE (BAH/74/016); (E) SHRIMP BIOLOGIST ATTACHED TO SAME MINISTRY (BAH/74/017): AN IMPORTANT EXPORT OF BAHRAIN, PROBABLY WORTH CONTINUING SUPPORT; (F) REGIONAL FISHERY SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT (REM/71/278): SEVEN ICELANDERS WHO ARE SURVEYING THE REGION; (G) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL PLANNING ADVISORS ATTACHED TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (BAH/73/011 AND 012); (H) NURSE EDUCATOR ATTACHED TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH (BAH/74/003). ALL THESE ADVISORS PROBABLY SHOULD BE PAID FOR COMPLETELY BY GOB, WITH UNDP ACTING AS RECRUITING AGENT ON GOB BEHALF.

5. AS FOR MAJOR NEW INITIATIVE OF ESTABLISHING COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND SCIENCES, EMBASSY WOULD PREFER TO DEFER JUDGMENT UNTIL THE PARAMETERS OF THE PROJECT AND COSTS INVOLVED ARE MORE DEFINITE (WE UNDERSTAND THIS INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE BY OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1977).

6. ROLE OF RESREP: CURRENT INCUMBENT, WHO ARRIVED IN BAHRAIN IN DECEMBER 1976, AFTER A HIATUS OF EIGHT MONTHS AFTER UNEXPECTED DEPARTURE OF HIS MEDICALLY-EVACUATED PREDECESSOR, INHERITED A RUNDOWN INSTITUTION. HE HAS DONE MUCH TO REGAIN THE CENTRAL COORDINATING ROLE FOR THE UN FAMILY OF AGENCIES IN BAHRAIN AND APPEARS KEEN TO COORDINATE WITH BILATERAL AID DONORS AS WELL (INCLUDING FRANCE, UK AND USA). WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH HIM THE MORE IMPORTANT COORDINATING PROBLEM: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT OF THE VERY GENEROUS AID WHICH IS FORTHCOMING IN THE MULTI-MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FROM SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES. THE RESREP, HIMSELF A SAUDI, WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ON THIS ROLE, WHICH WE THINK HE SHOULD, BUT IS CORRECTLY WAITING FOR GOB CONCURRENCE IN THIS REGARD.

7. ROLE OF WOMEN: OF THE THREE MAIN PROJECTS (THE COLLEGE, AND THE TWO VOCATIONAL TRAINING UNITS), TWO OF THEM HAVE A MAJORITY OF WOMEN PARTICIPANTS (THE COLLEGE AND THE HOTEL/ CATERING PROJECT). WOMEN ARE MOVING RAPIDLY INTO THE LABOR

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MARKET IN BAHRAIN AND THE UNDP AND GOB ACTIVELY PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THAT MOVEMENT. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, STILL RELATIVELY FEW HIGH-RANKING WOMEN IN OFFICIAL POSITIONS, EITHER IN UNDP OR GOB.

8. SELF-RELIANCE AND MUTUAL SELF-HELP: DURING THE 1975-76 FINANCIAL CRISIS OF UNDP (SEE 76 MANAMA 376 FOR DETAILS), GOB AGREED TO FINANCE ABOUT SEVENTY PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF THE UNDP-AFFILIATED PROGRAMS IN BAHRAIN. FOR THE 1977-81 CYCLE WE UNDERSTAND THE GOB WILL FUND SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OR \$7.5 MILLION. AS WE REPORTED EARLIER, THE CRISIS PLUS THE EXPANSION OF GOB FINANCIAL SUPPORT HAS RESULTED IN CLEARER PRIORITIES FOR THE PROGRAMS: SOME WERE DROPPED, OTHERS SCALED DOWN. WE SEE THIS AS ALTOGETHER HEALTHY AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN GENERAL VIEW THE EXISTING PROGRAM AS STRONGER AS A RESULT OF THE CRISIS. THAT SAID, WE STILL RECOMMEND THAT UNDP DROP SUPPORT FOR THE HOTEL/CATERING TRAINING PROJECT AS WELL AS SERIOUSLY QUESTION THE NEED TO FINANCE EVEN TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL ADVISORS NOTED IN PARA 4 ABOVE.
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